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## INDIA, CHINA, TIBET

by

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	Page
CONFLICT OVER INDIA'S NORTHERN BORDER	777
Chinese Probing Beyond Boundaries of Tibet	777
Character of Areas Invaded by Red Chinese	778
Tibetan Risings; Dalai Lama's Flight to India	779
Impact of Events on Chinese-Indian Relations	780
Peking's Claims to Indian Border Territories	781
BORDER PACTS AND ASIAN POLITICAL SHIFTS	783
Negotiation of McMahon Line Agreement, 1914	783
Era of Tibetan Autonomy; Indian Border Tribes	784
China's Conquest of Tibet; Agreement With India	785
Burma's Frontier Difficulties Since Independence	787
CHINA'S AIMS ALONG THE SOUTHERN BORDER	789
Sensitivity of Communists About Border Areas	789
Possible Reasons for Activity on Indian Border	790
Soviet Union's Stand on India's Dispute With China	791

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## INDIA, CHINA, TIBET

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**P**RIME MINISTER Nehru's policy of holding India to a strictly neutral course in the power struggle between the free and Communist worlds was rudely shaken during the past summer by forays of Chinese military detachments across the traditional frontier between Tibet and India. Clashes with Indian patrols occurred in the vicinity of widely separated border outposts. At last accounts, Chinese forces remained in possession of an outpost at Longju in India's Northeast Frontier Agency, which they had seized on Aug. 26, and of another outpost at Khinzemane in the same general region. Chinese forces which on July 28 apprehended an Indian patrol far to the northwest in the Ladakh area of Kashmir apparently had withdrawn.

Exchanges between New Delhi and Peking indicated that these and a number of additional Chinese incursions were more than minor border incidents. On the contrary, Red China seemed to be setting out to occupy extensive territories previously claimed only by depicting them on Chinese maps as within Tibet, which is legally a part of China. The Indian government uttered strong protests. Replying on Sept. 26 to a note of Sept. 8 from Chinese Communist Premier Chou En-lai, Nehru observed that China was putting forth claims to "large areas of Indian territory [40,000 square miles] inhabited by hundreds of thousands of Indian nationals, which have been under the administrative jurisdiction of India for many years." He added that "No government could possibly discuss the future of such large areas which are an integral part of their territory." Chou's letter had come as "a great shock to us," Nehru said, for India was one of the first nations to recognize the Communist government of China and Indians had "consistently sought to maintain and strengthen our friendships with your country."

While refusing to take up the larger Chinese claims, Nehru avowed willingness to consider minor border adjust-

### *Editorial Research Reports*

ments. He said in his letter to Chou, however, that "No discussions can be fruitful unless the posts on the Indian side of the traditional frontier now held by Chinese forces are first evacuated by them and further threats and intimidations immediately cease." Chou in a telegram to Nehru on Oct. 7 played down the border difficulties as "merely an episode in our age-old friendship." Although Nehru welcomed the friendly tone of this message, he warned at a news conference the following day that "any kind of advance" by Chinese forces from positions currently held on Indian territory would "certainly be fully resisted."

V. K. Krishna Menon, India's defense minister and chief delegate to the United Nations, described the Chinese forays to an American TV audience on Oct. 11 as "a very stupid action" but said the dispute must be settled by peaceful negotiation. Krishna Menon had reiterated before the General Assembly on Oct. 6 that India would not enter into negotiations until "every Chinese soldier" had been withdrawn from Indian soil.

#### CHARACTER OF AREAS INVADIED BY RED CHINESE

The recent border clashes have taken place in territory that for the most part is forbidding and sparsely inhabited. The boundary between Tibet and India's Northeast Frontier Agency, which forms a part of the state of Assam, runs along the crest of the lofty Himalayan mountain range. Known as the McMahon line, it is ordinarily crossed by only a few hardy travelers venturing over the high mountain passes. The border territory in Ladakh, a district of the Indian-held portion of Kashmir, was described by Nehru in the upper house of parliament on Aug. 31 as a "barren and uninhabited region without a vestige of grass." A corner of the Aksaichin area of Ladakh is wedged between western Tibet and China's Sinkiang province. China not only lays claim to this plateau, athwart the shortest route between Gartok in Tibet and Yarkand in Sinkiang, but two years ago built a road across it.

Also involved in the Sino-Indian dispute are the three small Himalayan border states of Nepal, Sikkim and Bhutan. Nepal is an independent kingdom. Sikkim is an Indian protectorate, and India is committed by treaty to defend both Sikkim and Bhutan "against any intrusion." The State Department has received reports that the Chinese Communists have been circulating leaflets south of

## India, China, Tibet



Tibet, saying that Tibet is the palm of China's hand and that all that remains to be done is to win back the fingers: the Northeast Frontier Agency, Ladakh, Nepal, Sikkim and Bhutan.

### TIBETAN RISINGS; DALAI LAMA'S FLIGHT TO INDIA

Chinese Communist colonialism lies behind the present border controversy. Tibet for a long time served as a buffer between British, Chinese, and Russian spheres of interest in that part of Asia. However, the Chinese Nationalists as well as Chinese Communists have regarded Tibet, though long autonomous, as an integral part of China. When the Communists came to power, they asserted Chinese sovereignty by forcibly "liberating" Tibet. After the Chinese conquest early in 1951, the McMahon line, never physically demarcated, became a potential source of friction with India because Chinese troops were stationed close to the line at certain points.

Chinese rule and Communist doctrine were unwelcome in Buddhist, theocratic Tibet, which had been in effect an independent state, not subject to any kind of Chinese control, from 1912 to 1951. Successive Tibetan insurrections in the past three years have involved guerrilla operations near the Indian frontier and have resulted in flight of

### *Editorial Research Reports*

thousands of Tibetans into India. Apparently the strongest continuing opposition to the Communist Chinese overlords comes from the extremely militant Khamba mountain tribesmen in the Kham area of eastern Tibet. The Khambas are devout Buddhists and completely loyal to the Dalai Lama, traditionally Tibet's temporal and spiritual ruler.

Chinese Communist troops in Tibet numbered 750,000 by March 1959; nearly half of them were brought in during 1957 to deal with the rebellion then under way. About five million Chinese colonizers also have entered Tibet. The Chinese occupation has produced a critical food situation. A Tibetan guerrilla leader, Gen. Tobgye Wangdue, has pointed out: "We used to be self-sufficient in foodstuffs, but with five million Chinese living on us, we are now in desperate economic trouble. The Reds have looted all our ancient granaries, where for centuries we have stored grain against famine years."<sup>1</sup>

The Chinese took ruthless measures to quell the most recent rebellion, which broke out in March 1959. The situation became so serious for Tibetan leaders that the Dalai Lama was forced to flee. On an arduous journey over the mountains, he managed to cross the border into the North-east Frontier Agency and was granted asylum in India. Since then the Chinese Communists have sought to seal off Tibet by stationing about 40,000 troops along the southern border. Peking announced last spring that the Tibetan revolt had been suppressed, but it informed the Indian government in August that the People's Liberation Army was starting a "punitive expedition" against still resisting rebels. New Delhi accordingly was advised that it would be unwise for Indian Buddhists "to come for pilgrimage" to Tibet this year.

#### IMPACT OF EVENTS ON CHINESE-INDIAN RELATIONS

The friendly relations of a decade between Communist China and India have suffered marked public deterioration as a result of events in Tibet and along the Indian frontier. Prime Minister Nehru, who often has acted as apologist for Red China, has shown unusual indignation toward Peking, and an aroused Indian public opinion has begun to regard

<sup>1</sup> Quoted by Geraldine Fitch, "Tibet Revolts Against Chinese Rule," *New Leader*, March 9, 1959, p. 17. No recent estimates of the population of Tibet are available, but a Chinese census report on ethnic minorities in 1954 showed only 2.5 million Tibetans in all of China, including Tibet.

### *India, China, Tibet*

Red China as a menace. Nehru appears determined to avoid entanglement in Chinese-Tibetan affairs, but some observers have suggested that the Chinese demonstration of force may cause India gradually to abandon its policy of neutralism in favor of alignment with the West.

Red China's suppression of the Tibetan revolt last spring did not go down well in New Delhi.<sup>2</sup> The Indian government felt itself unable to help the Tibetan insurgents, but Nehru commented, April 27, that "a tragedy" was "being enacted in Tibet," and he was "greatly distressed" by China's "fantastic" accusations against India. Peking had charged that the Tibetan rising was instigated from Kalimpong in India. Many Indians responded angrily to Chinese brutality in Tibet and to Red restrictions on Indian traders in Lhasa.

Indian newspaper reports of the summer military probes into India's border areas forced Nehru to take a firm public stand. Confirming that Chinese troops had entered the country at two points opposite Tibet, he declared on Aug. 28 that there was "no alternative for us but to defend our country's borders and integrity." A stiff protest was dispatched to Peking, and Nehru repeated an earlier warning that any Chinese attack on Sikkim and Bhutan would be tantamount to aggression against India itself. Indian reinforcements were sent into the Northeast Frontier Agency, where Gen. Kodendera Subayya Thimayya, known as an anti-Communist, took command. Nehru on Aug. 31 called the Red Chinese infiltration a "clear case of aggression" but ruled out any immediate use of force.

The Dalai Lama, who had been making anti-Chinese pronouncements from his refuge in northern India, appealed on Aug. 30 for United Nations action. He asserted that, since the revolt of last spring began, Chinese military forces in mass reprisals had killed an estimated 80,000 Tibetans. "With more Chinese than Tibetans in my country," the Dalai Lama said, "the complete extermination of the Tibetan race . . . is now in progress."

#### PEKING'S CLAIMS TO INDIAN BORDER TERRITORIES

Peking's claims to territory held by India have been foreshadowed for 10 years by circulation of maps on which Chinese territory is shown as extending well to the south

<sup>2</sup> See "India's Hard Years," *E.R.R.*, 1959 Vol. I, pp. 305-306.

of the McMahon line. When New Delhi protested, Peking replied that the maps had been published under the Kuomintang regime. But no corrected maps were put out. Commenting on Chinese cartographic annexations, the anti-Nehru Delhi weekly *Organiser* of May 24, 1954, called it "a serious matter that new Chinese maps continue to show Nepal, Bhutan, Sikkim and parts of Assam as Chinese territory."

In a note received at New Delhi last Sept. 3, Peking denied that Chinese troops had made incursions into India. Nehru told excited members of parliament the following day that the Chinese "accused us of some aggression on their border and . . . asked us to withdraw from one or two areas which they claim to be Chinese territory." The prime minister said he was prepared to submit minor disputes over the McMahon line to arbitration, but he declared that "The broad McMahon line has to be accepted." Referring to northeastern Ladakh, which is crossed by the Chinese-built road, Nehru said: "It is rather difficult for me to have any accurate statement. But so far as the corner of the Aksaichin area is concerned, . . . it has been and is claimed by the Chinese as their territory. . . . That is where the dispute is. . . . I do not know whether the Chinese are there . . . because we have no representative there and it is not an inhabited area."

Chinese Communist Premier Chou En-lai, in his note of Sept. 8 to Nehru, renewed charges that India was guilty of "trespassing and provocations" in the frontier area. He refused to accept India's version of the boundaries and said that the Chinese-Indian border in most places was still to be defined. Chou declared that China "absolutely does not recognize the so-called McMahon line" bounding the Northeast Frontier Agency. He maintained that the border of Kashmir's Ladakh section had never been formally delimited; China's central government did not participate in the negotiation of, or ratify, a peace treaty concluded in 1842 between local Tibetan and Kashmir authorities, and in any case that treaty did not specifically locate the boundary. According to Chou, the China-Ladakh border always shown on Chinese maps conformed with an existing "customary line derived from historical traditions." The premier said this line corresponded fairly closely to the line on a map published by the British East India Company in 1844, but that later British and Indian maps included large



tracts of Chinese territory in Ladakh without legal justification.

Chou opened his discussion of the border question in the Sept. 8 note as follows:

One cannot but . . . take into account the historical background of British aggression on China when India was under British rule. . . . Using India as its base, Britain conducted extensive territorial expansion into China's Tibet region, and even the Sinkiang region. . . . This constitutes the fundamental reason for the long-term disputes over . . . the Sino-Indian boundary question. . . . Unexpectedly to the Chinese government, . . . the Indian government demanded that the Chinese government give formal recognition to the conditions created by the application of the British policy of aggression against China's Tibet region as the foundation for the settlement of the Sino-Indian boundary question. What is more serious, the Indian government has applied all sorts of pressures on the Chinese government . . . to support this demand.

As for Tibet's borders with Sikkim and Bhutan, Chou stated that "this question does not fall within the scope of our present discussion," but that China has always respected the proper relations between those states and India. He added that an overall settlement of boundary disputes with India should be sought through friendly negotiations; "pending this, as a provisional measure, the two sides should maintain the long-existing status quo of the border."

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### **Border Pacts and Asian Political Shifts**

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THROUGH past millenia the Chinese have pushed to the west and south from their early home in north China. The non-Chinese Mongoloid peoples of Tibet and other parts of southwest China and Southeast Asia migrated there centuries ago from regions into which the Chinese had been spreading. Though separated by a wall of mountains, Chinese and Indians have been historical rivals for leadership in Asia. The rivalry was suppressed only during the comparatively brief period of European colonial rule in South and Southeast Asia.

British policy on Indian border problems had the dual purpose of containing Chinese pressure from the northeast and Russian pressure from the northwest. The British

wanted agreement on a defensible Sino-Indian boundary, and they favored an autonomous buffer status for the western part of Tibet (Outer Tibet), which gained *de facto* independence in 1912 and had its capital at Lhasa. A conference held in 1913-14 at Simla in India drafted the tripartite British-Tibetan-Chinese convention that fixed India's northeastern boundary with China or, specifically, with the eastern part of Tibet (Inner Tibet), which was supposedly under Chinese rule. This boundary, called the McMahon line after Sir Arthur Henry McMahon, the British representative at the conference, was drawn for strategic reasons approximately along the Himalayan divide. The Simla convention was duly ratified by Britain and Tibet; China initialed the convention but did not sign or ratify it.<sup>3</sup>

#### ERA OF TIBETAN AUTONOMY; INDIAN BORDER TRIBES

No Chinese government exercised effective authority over Inner or Outer Tibet during the period between World War I and Red China's conquest of Tibet in 1951. The fact that China had not formally accepted the McMahon line seemed, therefore, to have no practical importance. As the Tibetans succeeded in expelling the Chinese from the whole frontier area, the McMahon line was effectively the border of India with Tibet rather than China. And the Tibetans recognized the frontier clause of the 1914 convention as binding.

The McMahon line is the northern border of Assam. A zone about 100 miles deep, south of the frontier, was designated the Northeast Frontier Agency. Since the independent government of India took over the agency in 1947, it has been divided into four administrative areas, the Kameng, Subansiri, Siang and Lohit districts. The Northeast Frontier Agency is in inaccessible and steeply mountainous country. Dense forests on the southern slopes of the Himalayas, watered by the heavy monsoon rains, contrast with the open, almost treeless Tibetan highlands north of the Himalayan divide.

The Northeast Frontier Agency is inhabited by seven primitive tribes speaking Tibeto-Burman languages. These tribes, which have no large-scale political organization, are

<sup>3</sup> The Indian Ministry of External Affairs said on Sept. 8 that China's refusal to ratify the Simla convention was based, not on objection to the McMahon line between India and Tibet, but to the proposed line of demarcation between Inner and Outer Tibet.

### *India, China, Tibet*

unconnected with the more civilized inhabitants of the Assam plain to the south, who are Assamese or Bengali in speech and Hindu in religion. Except for the westernmost tribe, the Monba, all of the primitive peoples used to enjoy independence in their mountain valleys. A section of the Monba is under the jurisdiction of the Tawang lama monastery, which is a branch of the Drebung monastery in Lhasa. Though this is primarily an ecclesiastic jurisdiction and the governing officials are Buddhist monks, it could be regarded as a Tibetan suzerainty because of Tibet's theocratic political organization.

After the British annexed Assam in 1826, they made agreements with the hill tribes under which the British authorities paid annual subsidies to the tribal chiefs, and gave them permission to trade in Assam markets, in return for promises that the tribes would stop raiding the lowlands. The agreement with the Monba tribe mentioned the Tibetan suzerainty, but none of the agreements referred to China. The British did not wish to administer the tribal area directly; they regarded it as a buffer zone between India and Tibet.

#### CHINA'S CONQUEST OF TIBET; AGREEMENT WITH INDIA

With the effective removal of western power from Asia after World War II, China and India became resurgent rivals for leadership in Southeast Asia. These two huge countries represent, respectively, the first and second heaviest concentrations of population in the world. In the last analysis, Chinese and Indian expansionist pressures derive from multiplying numbers. The huge annual population growth of China and India may be the single most important political factor in Asia today.<sup>4</sup>

Attainment of independence by India, Pakistan, Ceylon and Burma broke the old military arc, based on British naval power, that extended from Suez to Southeast Asia. The postwar contraction of the British colonial presence in Asia left a sizable and significant power vacuum in the frontier zone comprising Afghanistan, Kashmir and Tibet. Independent India and Pakistan inherited from the British the problem of resisting Sino-Soviet pressure from across the northern frontier.<sup>5</sup> Chinese expansive tendencies, at

<sup>4</sup> China's population is approximately 600 million; India's is about 320 million.

<sup>5</sup> The Chinese maps that show parts of India and Indian-held Kashmir within China's frontiers include also as Chinese territory parts of Pakistani-held Kashmir.

### *Editorial Research Reports*

least up to now, have been reinforced by Soviet support. By contrast, the antagonism between India and Pakistan and the quarrel between them over Kashmir have been a handicap in coping with outside pressure.<sup>6</sup>

From the beginning, New Delhi has pursued an understandably cautious policy toward Peking. In particular, Nehru has tried to refrain from interfering in Sino-Tibetan relations. Soon after installation of the Chinese Communist central government in October 1949, Peking proclaimed its intention to order the People's Liberation Army to "liberate" Tibet. New Delhi protested in notes to Peking but finally decided it could do nothing to prevent the impending conquest. Yet China's action was to change the Indo-Tibetan frontier relationship and again raise serious border questions.

The Chinese occupation of Tibet made it necessary to withdraw the small Indian garrisons stationed for 40 years at the Tibetan market centers of Yatung and Gyantse. The Chinese conquest brought restrictions on Indian traders in Tibet and harassment of Indian pilgrims to Buddhist sacred places there. New Delhi opened discussions on these matters with Peking late in 1953 and on April 29, 1954, the two countries signed an Agreement on Trade and Intercourse between "the Tibet region of China" and India. The agreement referred throughout to the "Tibet region of China." By accepting that terminology, India in effect recognized unrestricted Chinese sovereignty over Tibet and dampened any hopes in Lhasa of gaining Indian support of Tibetan claims to autonomy.<sup>7</sup>

The Sino-Indian agreement of 1954 enunciated for the first time the famous five principles of coexistence, which were endorsed in 1955 by the Bandung conference of Asian and African nations. The five principles, written into the preamble of the 1954 agreement, called for respect for each other's sovereignty and territorial integrity, non-aggression, non-interference in internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful coexistence.

<sup>6</sup> See "Kashmir Conflict," *F.R.R.*, 1958 Vol. I, pp. 322-340.

<sup>7</sup> Since coming to India, the Dalai Lama has made several statements claiming sovereignty or virtual sovereignty for his country. He pointed out on Sept. 7, for example, that Tibet enjoyed plenipotentiary status at the Simla conference. Although the Simla convention recognized Chinese suzerainty over Tibet, China did not ratify the convention. The Dalai Lama contended that Tibet therefore retained sovereign status, and that to deny as much would be to deny the validity of the Simla convention and the boundary line it fixed. The Indian Ministry of External Affairs insisted the following day, however, that there was no connection between the McMahon line and Tibet's juridical status.

### *India, China, Tibet*

The agreement—to remain in force for eight years—provided, among other things, for continuance of Indian trade agencies at Yatung, Gyantse and Gartok and for extension of special travel and communications privileges to Indians. Reciprocally, China was to be permitted to set up three trade agencies in India—at New Delhi, Calcutta and Kalimpong. Pilgrimages from India to Tibet were to be allowed along specified routes, and fair treatment of the pilgrims was promised. A supplementary exchange of notes provided for withdrawal within six months of the military garrisons stationed at India's trade agencies at Yatung and Gyantse.

#### BURMA'S FRONTIER DIFFICULTIES SINCE INDEPENDENCE

Closely corresponding to current Chinese encroachments on Indian territory was the China-Burma border dispute of 1956, which involved Red Chinese military incursions. As in the case of India, Bhutan, Sikkim and Nepal, Chinese Communist maps showed territory in northern Burma as Chinese, as had maps published while Chiang Kai-shek was in power on the mainland. The China-Burma boundary had been agreed to by a Sino-British commission under Swiss chairmanship, and the line had been accepted by an exchange of notes in 1941. Upon attaining independence in 1948, Burma believed it took over the territory previously governed by Britain. But a considerable stretch of the border had never been properly demarcated, and the Chinese Communists proceeded in time to exploit this situation.

A Rangoon newspaper, *The Nation*, reported in July 1956 that Red Chinese troops had penetrated northern Burma and engaged in shooting affrays with Burmese army units. The Burmese foreign office soon confirmed the report as substantially correct. Chinese forces had set up outposts on Burmese territory. According to Burmese Premier U Ba Swe, the Chinese had gradually infiltrated the border area over a two-year period. The premier, not regarding the situation as serious, said he thought withdrawal of the troops could be arranged by negotiations with Peking.

The reply to Burma's formal protest was not published. Peking Radio admitted that Chinese troops had occupied outposts in "disputed" Chinese-Burmese frontier areas and said they would not be withdrawn until a settlement had been reached. *The Nation* asserted that Peking had offered to evacuate the occupied area if the Burmese would

cede other disputed areas. Former Premier U Nu of Burma, returning from a trip to Peking in November 1956, disclosed that Burma would relinquish its perpetual lease of a tract of Chinese land on Burma's northern frontier, and would also cede three northern villages to China. In return, Peking would recognize Burma's claim to the remainder of the disputed territory. Apparently this arrangement was carried out; Peking Radio announced in December 1956 that Chinese Communist troops had withdrawn from Burma.

The question of China's motives for pressing a frontier dispute with Burma gave rise to considerable speculation, which is pertinent to current discussions about Sino-Indian frontier incidents. Michael Lindsay, Senior Fellow in the Department of International Relations at the Australian National University, commented as follows:

It could be argued on the Chinese side that these [boundary] lines were unfairly drawn because, at the time, China had been weak and Burma, as part of the British Empire, had been strong. . . . A possible explanation is that Chinese policy is not completely coordinated. The local leaders in a remote area may have acted to some extent on their own, and nationalist feeling may have been so strong that the Chinese Foreign Office could not openly repudiate their action but could only secure withdrawal as part of a bargain with Burma.<sup>8</sup>

The consensus, however, was that Red China was seeking to intimidate Burma. Two American experts on Southeast Asia suggested the likelihood that the Chinese move was "designed to keep pressure on the Burmese government as a means of reminding the Burmese of the possibility of trouble with China if their foreign policy moved in a direction inimicable to Peiping."<sup>9</sup> Observers pointed out that by mid-1956 there had been tangible improvement in Burmese relations with the United States, and that the Rangoon government was considering steps to restrict Chinese Communist political and economic activity inside Burma.

<sup>8</sup> Michael Lindsay, "The Policy of the Chinese People's Government in Asia," *Journal of International Affairs*, No. 2, 1957 (no month), p. 146.

<sup>9</sup> Amry Vandenbosch and Richard A. Butwell, *Southeast Asia Among the World Powers* (1957), p. 245.

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## China's Aims Along the Southern Border

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SOON AFTER the Communists gained sway over all mainland China 10 years ago, they initiated a foreign policy that implied contempt for the interests of China's neighbors as well as of western nations. It was suggested that Peking might be aiming at restoration of the old Chinese empire to its widest extent. If maps can be regarded as a clue to territorial aims, it is worth noting that some maps published under the Red regime reportedly indicate designs on Outer Mongolia. It has often been pointed out that any strong Chinese government would probably try to restore Chinese control over formerly dependent areas. Maps published during the Kuomintang period sometimes showed the extreme boundaries of the Mongol dynasty's empire as Chinese.

Summing up Red China's border policy in an address at the September 1959 meeting of the American Political Science Association in Washington, D. C., A. Doak Barnett of the Council on Foreign Relations said:

The Chinese Communists are sensitive about all their border areas, and, like most strong Chinese rulers in the past, they have exerted outward pressures at many points on China's circumference. Undoubtedly, Peking now regards both North Korea and North Viet Nam as buffer areas of great importance, and it would probably go to great lengths to prevent any serious military threat to China arising in or from either area. It has probed the undefined Burma frontier, and created serious doubts about China's intentions regarding some of its other borders which are as yet not clearly settled.

Barnett added: "Conceivably, at some time in the future, the Chinese Communists might put forth irredentist claims elsewhere, to Hong Kong and Macao or to territory on the India border; it is not beyond the realm of possibility that they might some day try to re-establish claims to territory in Outer Mongolia or in the Soviet Far East where the Chinese once were predominant." Assistant Secretary of State Andrew H. Berding referred in an address before the National Association of Broadcasters on Oct. 16 to recent developments in Tibet, in Laos and on the Indian border. He said that the expansionist aims of the Chinese Communist leaders, "backed by fanatical policies," constituted "perhaps the greatest single threat to peace in the world today."



## Editorial Research Reports

### POSSIBLE REASONS FOR ACTIVITY ON INDIAN BORDER

Different hypotheses have been advanced to explain Chinese Communist motives in exerting pressure on Indian border areas. Some experts hold that the unmistakably hardened Chinese attitude marks a major turning point in Sino-Indian relations, and that Red Chinese pressure on India is likely to continue for an indefinite period. Others say that Peking's demonstration of power does not mean it is prepared for hostilities on the scale of the Korean War. Possibly Communist China's leaders calculate that neither India nor the West really intends to try to block southward expansion of Chinese influence. The London *Economist* of Sept. 5, 1959, analyzed the motives as follows:

The primary aim of the Chinese in challenging the McMahon Line is probably, as in Ladakh, Nepal, Sikkim and Bhutan, to bring under Chinese control all the centres of Lamaic Buddhism which continue to recognise the spiritual authority of the Dalai Lama; as long as any of these remain beyond their reach, Tibetan nationalism cannot be decisively crushed. A secondary purpose is doubtless to impress the Chinese people with a display of the Communists' patriotic zeal in revising a frontier which was established without China's formal consent. A third motive may well be a desire to demonstrate, for the benefit of everyone in South and South East Asia that China is stronger than India and can force the Indian government to give way.<sup>10</sup>

Many observers think the military probes into India, and simultaneous pressure on Laos,<sup>11</sup> were intended in part to take the minds of the Chinese masses off matters of domestic discontent. Foreign dangers could be used as additional justification for regimentation to expedite the back-breaking production drive, though some relaxation in the commune system has been reported.<sup>12</sup>

Communist China's top leaders met last August in closed session at a mountain resort, presumably to overhaul national policies in general. It has been suggested that an additional activity was to plan the skirmishes along the McMahon line for the eve of Nikita S. Khrushchev's trip to the United States, in an attempt to embarrass the Soviet premier and impede any détente between the U.S.S.R. and the Western allies. The Chinese show of strength may have signified that Peking wants to prevent any East-West settlement in which it does not participate, or at least to demonstrate that it is not under Moscow's control.

<sup>10</sup> "The McMahon Line," *The Economist*, Sept. 5, 1959, p. 716.

<sup>11</sup> See "Menaced Laos," *E.R.R.*, 1959 Vol. II, pp. 716-734.

<sup>12</sup> See "Red China's Communes," *E.R.R.*, 1959 Vol. I, pp. 204-222.



### *India, China, Tibet*

Whatever their motives, the Chinese Communists have shown that they are not greatly concerned about international approval of what they do. In pursuing a tough policy toward Tibet and its southern neighbors, Peking seems to have discounted the adverse effect on China's relations with India and the other uncommitted nations of South and Southeast Asia. As in the case of Burma in 1956, Red China now seems to be showing India that it would rather be feared than loved. Some experts think that Communist China, now in a Stalinist phase, may be exerting pressure on India to the long-term calculated end of weakening India's somewhat precarious national unity.

#### SOVIET UNION'S STAND ON INDIA'S DISPUTE WITH CHINA

Having maintained silence on the Sino-Indian border dispute for nearly a fortnight after Nehru accused Red China of aggression, Moscow Radio on Sept. 9 broadcast a statement that was unusual because impartial. The statement, issued by the official Soviet press agency Tass, said:

The incident on the Chinese-Indian frontier is certainly deplorable. The Soviet Union maintains friendly relations both with the People's Republic of China and the Republic of India. . . . The Soviet leading quarters express confidence that . . . the two governments will settle the misunderstandings that have arisen, . . . in the spirit of the traditional friendship between the peoples of China and India.

The Tass statement, issued the day after Chou's note to Nehru advocating negotiations, was interpreted by some observers as a Soviet offer to mediate. Paul Wohl wrote in the *Christian Science Monitor*, Sept. 10, 1959, that "A diplomatic conflict between India and China . . . inevitably casts Premier Nikita S. Khrushchev in the role of mediator." Because Communist China is not a member of the United Nations, India "cannot have recourse effectively to that organization."

Khrushchev's trip to Peking, following his American tour, gave him an opportunity to intercede in China's dispute with India. Although the occasion of the visit was Communist China's 10th anniversary celebration, Khrushchev had announced that he planned talks with Chinese leaders. When the Soviet premier came to the United States, it was suggested that President Eisenhower should ask him to try to persuade Peking to refrain from military action beyond China's borders. However, many observ-

ers question whether Moscow has that much influence in the capital of its great Asian ally.

In the Taiwan Strait dispute in 1958 Moscow supported Peking's stand, though the Chinese Reds are believed to have begun the sudden bombardment of Quemoy without Russian prompting and perhaps over Russian opposition.<sup>13</sup> Red attacks on the Nationalist-held offshore island were discussed in an Eisenhower-Khrushchev exchange of letters in September 1958. Eisenhower suggested in his letter of Sept. 12 that Khrushchev "urge these [Chinese Communist] leaders to discontinue their military operations and to turn to a policy of peaceful settlement of the Taiwan dispute." Khrushchev replied, Sept. 19, that American forces ought to leave Taiwan and Taiwan Strait and "go home." He said that "If the U.S. of A. does not do this now, then no other way will be left to the people of China except the expulsion of armed forces hostile to it from its own territory, on which a *place d'armes* is being created for an attack on the Chinese People's Republic."

The conspicuous absence of overt Soviet support for Peking's position in the quarrel with India has fed speculation about Sino-Soviet friction. It has been suggested that Peking, by carrying its quarrel with New Delhi beyond what may suit Soviet purposes, may be putting pressure on Moscow for more economic aid. Although the Red Chinese have been trying to reduce dependence on the U.S.S.R. as rapidly as possible, Russian help is still indispensable to expansion of Chinese industrial and military strength. Whatever the real state of Sino-Soviet relationships, growth of Chinese aggressiveness in Asia must create embarrassment for Khrushchev as he turns a more conciliatory face toward the West.

<sup>13</sup> The shelling began Aug. 23, 1958.







